

## **Segment 11 – Summative Evaluation**

*Dr. Beverly Showers describes the Des Moines Public Schools' evaluation of secondary level readers after implementing strategies for reading improvement.*

Is this staff development program working to accomplish what we wanted it to accomplish? We have only one case study, Des Moines Public School District, that has summative data. All the rest of the case studies will have their first year's data coming in September, if I understand when you're doing your state testing.

I'd like to share with you briefly the goals and the kinds of analyses that are done for summative evaluation. In Des Moines, the goal was strictly reading comprehension for struggling secondary readers. They were getting students in middle school and high school who were reading two, three, four years below grade level, and clearly facing an uphill battle to succeed in the secondary level. So, if you think of it as dropout prevention, or opening up future possibilities for education, the whole district had this focus. Only the secondary schools—middle schools and high schools—participate in this.

The analysis for the professional development program looks very similar to what the district has to do for No Child Left Behind. What we said for reading comprehension [in our analysis] was that the regular education students grew two years and one month this past year on a standardized test. Mainstreamed special education students grew one year in nine months. We always look at boys and girls separately in evaluation, because in reading girls tend to do much better than boys do, and Des Moines really focused on their boys this last year to try to change that. The average growth for the boys last year was two years and two months, and for the girls one year and nine months. This is a fairly unusual finding and just shows the persistence of these teachers that they weren't going to let the boys get away from them.

Students who are economically poor—from looking at your state's data—tend to lag quite a bit behind others. [The teachers] got two years average growth last year in reading with those students. And then when they look at sub-groups, you'll see that the average for the sub-groups was two years.

So what you're trying to find out is: we have this concern; we've set a goal; we don't want to lose these older students. Usually reading is thought of as a primary thing, but we're going to implement a staff development program aimed at these students, and can we pull them up? And what we're asking is, "Is it too late for them?" The answer is no, and not for any of the sub-groups is it too late either. That's what you want to do in a summative evaluation.